

Crossing the Line: A Paris Homicide Mystery

Frédérique Molay

Anne Trager, Translator

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From the Paris setting to the autopsy scenes, Molay's descriptions add believable imagery to this page-turner mystery.

Jewelry heists and murders keep police busy chasing the bad guys in *Crossing the Line: A Paris Homicide Mystery*, by Frédérique Molay. Clues and cadavers seem to pop up everywhere, forcing the detectives to poke their noses into some dangerous corners as they try to figure out who did it and why, in this entertaining murder mystery.

Chief Nico Sirsky is back on the job at the Paris Criminal Investigation Division following three months of grueling recovery from a leg wound he suffered at the hands of a serial killer. On the bright side, he's fallen in love with Caroline, though his former wife is still missing. Nico is supposed to be prepping for the arrests of the thieves who got away with eighty-five million euros of jewelry, when a very strange case drops into his lap. Students dissecting heads over at the body donation lab find a note lodged in a cadaver's tooth, and it seems to point to murder rather than suicide. Or it could be a prank by medical students. Nico and his colleagues are led down a path filled with medical malfeasance and perps who aren't afraid to kill off anyone who gets too close.

Molay leaves no cobblestone unturned when describing the beautiful Paris backdrop and its history. "The Rue Thiron was wide but short, lined with trees and perpendicular to the Rue de Rivoli and the Rue François Miron. The former was known the world over, but who knew that the latter was where King Louis XIV, the Sun King, had lost his innocence to a lady-in-waiting nicknamed One-Eyed Kate?" This kind of embellishment enriches the story and makes it fun to read.

Although the story drags a little in the beginning while Molay sets the stage, it speeds up nicely when she inserts a series of plot thickeners that give the story complexity and depth. When more dead bodies, puzzling clues, and conflicting character motivations get thrown into the fray, the action heats up, and the book is suddenly a page-turner.

Francophile mystery lovers who are also fans of police procedurals will find *Crossing the Line*, the second in the Paris Homicide series, a satisfying read. It's a novel to be devoured in one sitting with the lights on.

DIANE PROKOP (Winter 2015)

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